

Cropland Use in 1996

- One or more crops will be harvested from an estimated 314 million acres of land in 1996, up from 302 million acres last year and the largest area harvested since 1986.
- The increase in cropland harvested came primarily from the reduction in cropland idled in Federal programs.

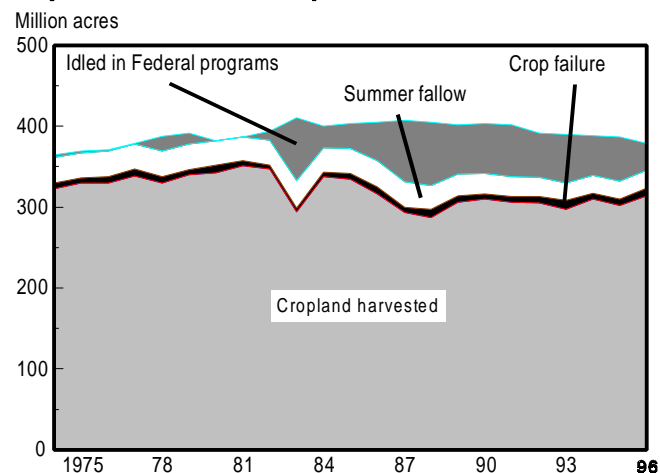
An estimated 346 million acres are expected to be used for crops in 1996, up 12 million from 1995 (table 1) and the highest acreage since 1986. This increase resulted from a sharp increase in estimated cropland harvested due to the elimination of annual crop set-aside programs and some reduction in the amount of land idled in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP).

Harvest estimates of principal crops total 314 million acres, which with minor crops will likely raise total harvested acres to nearly 327 million acres. About 12 million of the harvested acres are estimated to be double-cropped. Allowing for double cropping, cropland harvested will total more than 314 million acres, up 11 million acres from 1995.

Estimated cropland harvested is up more than 6 percent in the Northern Plains States and 4 percent or more in the Mountain and Corn Belt regions (table 2). Largely due to weather conditions, crop failure is estimated to be higher than in 1995, especially in the Southern Plains, Northern Plains, and Lake States farm production regions.

Nearly 45 percent of the cropland idled by Federal programs is in the Northern Plains and Mountain regions (table 3). An

Major Uses of U.S. Cropland



additional 31 percent is in the Corn Belt and Southern Plains regions. Due to changes in farm programs, no cropland has been idled in annual Federal crop programs in 1996 (table 4). The land idled in Federal programs is in the CRP and the estimates include only changes in contracted acreage to the beginning of 1996.

The 1996 estimated harvested acreages of corn, sorghum, barley, wheat, and soybeans are up from 1995 with corn accounting for the largest increase (table 5). The acreages of oats, cotton, and rice estimated to be harvested in 1996 are down compared with 1995.

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About AREI UPDATES

AREI UPDATES is a periodic series that supplements and updates information in **Agricultural Resources and Environmental Indicators (AREI)**, USDA, ERS, AH-705, Dec. 1994. **UPDATES** report recent data from surveys of farm operators and others knowledgeable about changing agricultural resource use and conditions, with only minimal interpretation or analysis. Please contact the individual listed at the end of the text for additional information about the data in this **UPDATE**. If you would like to be added to the mailing list or have other questions about **AREI UPDATES** or **AREI**, contact Richard Magleby, (202) 219-0436. [rmagleby@econ.ag.gov]

Table 1—Major uses of cropland, United States, 1987-96¹

Cropland	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996 ²
<i>Million acres</i>										
Cropland used for crops ³	331	327	341	341	337	337	330	339	332	346
Cropland harvested ⁴	293	287	306	310	306	305	297	310	302	314
Crop failure	6	10	8	6	7	8	11	7	8	9
Cultivated summer fallow	32	30	27	25	24	24	22	22	22	22
Cropland idled by all										
Federal programs ³	76	78	61	62	65	55	60	49	55	34
Annual programs	60	53	31	28	30	20	23	13	18	0
Conservation Reserve Program	16	25	30	34	35	35	36	36	36	34
Total, specified uses ^{3,5}	407	405	402	403	402	392	389	388	388	380

¹ Includes the 48 contiguous States. Fewer than 200,000 acres were used for crops in Alaska and Hawaii.

² Preliminary, subject to revision.

³ Breakdown may not add to totals due to rounding.

⁴ A double-cropped acre is counted as 1 acre.

⁵ Does not include cropland pasture or idle land not in Federal programs that is normally included in the total cropland base.

Source: USDA, ERS, developed from a variety of published and unpublished data from FSA (formerly ASCS), ERS, and NASS.

Table 2—Cropland used for crops in 1996, and 1995-96 change, by region

Table 2—Cropland used for crops in 1996, and 1995-96 change, by region					
Region	Cropland used for crops ¹			Total ²	Share of all cropland used for crops
	Cropland harvested	Crop failure	Summer fallow		
1996:	-----Million acres-----				Percent
Northeast	10.5	0.2	-	10.7	3.1
Lake States	34.1	0.8	-	34.9	10.1
Corn Belt	80.6	1.6	-	82.2	23.8
Northern Plains	76.2	1.9	10.8	88.9	25.7
Appalachian	16.8	0.4	-	17.2	5.0
Southeast	10.6	0.4	-	10.9	3.1
Delta States	16.0	0.3	-	16.3	4.7
Southern Plains	27.2	2.8	0.7	30.7	8.9
Mountain	25.8	0.7	8.1	34.6	10.0
Pacific	16.5	0.2	2.4	19.1	5.5
United States ^{2,3}	314.2	9.4	22.0	345.6	100.0

1995-96 change:	-----Percent-----				
Northeast	1.9	0.0	⁴	0.9	
Lake States	2.4	33.3	⁴	2.6	
Corn Belt	4.3	0.0	⁴	4.2	
Northern Plains	6.1	26.7	-0.5	5.6	
Appalachian	2.4	-11.2	⁴	2.0	
Southeast	3.9	-3.5	⁴	1.7	
Delta States	1.9	-2.7	⁴	1.8	
Southern Plains	2.6	64.7	3.6	6.3	
Mountain	4.0	3.6	0.0	3.1	
Pacific	3.8	-33.3	-1.0	3.1	
United States ^{2,3}	3.9	19.6	-0.2	4.0	

- = None or fewer than 50,000 acres.

¹ Preliminary. Based on farmers' intentions to harvest.

² Breakdown may not add to totals due to rounding.

³ Includes the 48 contiguous States. Fewer than 100,000 acres were used for the principal crops in Alaska and Hawaii.

⁴ No change or less than 0.05 percent.

Source: USDA, ERS, developed from various published and unpublished data.

Table 3—Cropland idled under Federal acreage reduction programs, by region, 1987-96

Cropland	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996 ¹
<i>Million acres</i>										
Northeast	0.9	0.9	0.7	0.7	0.6	0.5	0.7	0.4	0.5	0.2
Lake States	7.0	6.7	4.7	4.7	4.7	4.0	5.6	3.4	4.2	2.8
Corn Belt	15.3	13.9	8.8	9.0	8.2	7.3	10.0	6.0	8.7	5.4
Northern Plains	19.7	20.8	15.8	16.8	18.4	14.8	15.0	12.5	15.4	8.9
Appalachian	2.7	3.0	2.3	2.3	2.1	1.9	2.1	1.7	1.7	1.0
Southeast	3.0	3.2	3.0	3.0	2.9	2.8	2.9	2.6	2.3	1.5
Delta States	3.5	3.1	3.0	2.6	2.7	2.2	2.4	2.1	1.9	1.2
Southern Plains	11.7	12.0	10.0	9.8	11.0	9.0	9.1	8.8	8.5	5.1
Mountain	8.7	10.2	9.1	9.6	10.5	9.3	9.1	8.8	8.9	6.5
Pacific	3.5	3.8	3.2	3.1	3.6	3.1	2.9	2.8	2.7	1.7
United States ^{2,3}	76.2	77.7	60.8	61.6	64.5	54.9	59.8	49.2	54.8	34.4

¹ Preliminary estimates of remaining enrollment in the CRP for FY-96.

² Includes the 48 contiguous States. Because of rounding, regional data may not sum to U.S. totals.

³ Includes cropland idled in 0,50/85-92 programs. Does not include about 0.5 million acres in 1991, 0.7 million acres in 1992, 0.8 million acres in 1993, 1.6 million acres in 1994, and 1.3 million acres in 1995 enrolled in 0,50/85-92 programs and planted to minor oilseeds. Also includes 2.0 million acres enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program in 1986, 15.7 million acres enrolled in 1987, 24.5 million acres enrolled in 1988, 29.8 million acres enrolled in 1989, 33.9 million acres enrolled in 1990, 34.4 million acres enrolled in 1991, 35.4 million acres enrolled in 1992, and 36.4 million acres enrolled in 1993, 1994, and 1995.

Source: USDA, ERS, developed from various published and unpublished data from FSA.

Table 4—Cropland idled under Federal acreage reduction programs, 1987-96

Program and crop	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996 ¹
<i>Million acres</i>										
Annual programs, base acres:										
Corn	3.2	20.5	10.8	10.7	7.4	5.2	10.7	2.0	7.5	0
Sorghum	4.1	3.9	3.3	3.3	2.4	2.0	2.2	1.6	1.6	0
Barley	3.0	2.8	2.3	2.9	2.1	2.3	2.2	2.1	2.4	0
Oats	0.8	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.5	0.6	0.8	0.5	0.7	0
Wheat	23.9	22.5	9.6	7.5	15.6	7.3	5.4	4.6	5.5	0
Cotton	3.9	2.2	3.5	2.0	1.2	1.7	1.4	1.7	0.2	0
Rice	1.6	1.1	1.2	1.0	0.9	0.4	0.7	0.3	0.5	0
Total, annual programs ²	60.5	53.3	30.9	27.7	30.1	19.5	23.4	12.8	18.4	0
Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), base acres: ³										
Corn	2.3	2.8	3.4	3.8	3.9	4.1	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.0
Sorghum	1.2	1.9	2.2	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.4
Barley	1.1	1.9	2.4	2.7	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.7
Oats	0.5	0.9	1.1	1.3	1.3	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.3
Wheat	4.2	7.1	8.8	10.3	10.4	10.6	10.8	10.8	10.8	10.5
Cotton	0.7	1.0	1.2	1.3	1.3	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4
Rice	⁴	⁴	⁴	⁴	⁴	⁴	⁴	⁴	⁴	⁴
Total CRP-idled base acres ²	10.0	15.5	19.0	21.8	22.0	22.6	23.3	23.3	23.3	22.3
Total base acres idled ²	70.5	68.8	49.9	49.5	52.1	42.1	46.7	36.1	41.7	22.3
Total CRP-idled nonbase acres	5.7	8.9	10.9	12.1	12.4	12.8	13.2	13.2	13.2	12.1
Total cropland idled under Federal programs ²	76.2	77.7	60.8	61.6	64.5	54.9	59.8	49.2	54.8	34.4

¹ Preliminary estimates of remaining enrollment in the CRP for FY-96.

² Because of rounding, crop acreages may not sum to totals. Base acreages idled under 0/92 and 50/92 programs from 1986 through 1992 are included in annual program data. However, base acres of feed grains and wheat enrolled in 0/92 and planted to oilseeds or other permitted crops in 1991 (0.5 million acres), in 1992 (0.7 million acres), in 1993 (1.0 million acres), in 1994 (1.6 million acres), and in 1995 (1.5 million acres) are not included.

³ Program began in 1986. Small acreages of peanut and tobacco base were bid into the CRP in addition to the crops listed.

⁴ Less than 50,000 acres.

Source: USDA, ERS, developed from various published and unpublished data from FSA.

Table 5—Harvested area of major crops, by region, 1990-96

Crop and period	North-east	Lake States	Corn Belt	Northern Plains	Appalachian	South-east	Delta States	Southern Plains	Mountain	Pacific	United States ¹
<i>Million acres</i>											
Corn: ²											
1990-94 avg.	2.2	11.1	34.3	13.1	3.1	1.2	0.5	1.8	1.1	0.3	68.7
1995	2.2	11.4	31.3	12.6	2.7	0.9	.6	2.0	1.0	0.3	65.0
1996 ³	2.5	12.6	34.0	15.0	3.2	1.3	1.3	2.0	1.2	0.4	73.3
Sorghum: ²											
1990-94 avg.	-	-	0.8	4.6	0.1	0.1	0.5	3.4	0.4	⁴	9.8
1995	-	-	0.7	4.2	⁴	⁴	0.3	2.7	0.3	-	8.3
1996 ³	-	-	0.9	5.8	⁴	⁴	.4	4.4	.5	-	12.0
Barley:											
1990-94 avg.	0.2	0.8	-	3.0	0.1	⁴	-	⁴	2.4	0.8	7.3
1995	0.2	0.7	-	2.4	0.1	⁴	-	⁴	2.3	0.6	6.3
1996 ³	0.2	0.6	-	2.7	0.1	⁴	-	⁴	2.3	0.8	6.8
Oats:											
1990-94 avg.	0.3	1.2	0.8	1.6	⁴	0.1	⁴	0.2	0.2	0.1	4.6
1995	0.3	0.8	0.5	0.9	⁴	0.1	⁴	0.1	0.2	0.1	3.0
1996 ³	0.3	0.6	0.4	0.8	⁴	⁴	⁴	0.1	0.2	0.1	2.7
Wheat:											
1990-94 avg.	0.6	3.3	4.7	27.6	1.6	0.9	1.5	9.1	9.7	3.9	62.8
1995	0.6	3.0	4.5	27.0	1.7	0.7	1.2	8.0	10.2	4.0	61.0
1996 ³	0.7	3.2	4.5	27.3	1.8	0.7	1.6	7.8	11.0	4.4	63.1
Soybeans:											
1990-94 avg.	1.2	7.2	30.1	7.2	4.0	1.6	6.5	0.5	-	-	58.2
1995	1.2	8.1	32.5	8.2	3.8	1.1	6.2	0.5	-	-	61.6
1996 ³	1.1	8.4	33.2	8.5	4.0	1.3	6.4	0.6	-	-	63.4
Cotton:											
1990-94 avg.	-	-	0.3	⁴	1.0	1.2	3.1	5.2	0.5	1.1	12.4
1995	-	-	0.4	⁴	1.6	2.5	3.6	6.1	0.5	1.3	16.0
1996 ³	-	-	0.4	⁴	1.4	2.3	3.0	4.4	.4	1.2	13.0
Rice:											
1990-94 avg.	-	-	0.1	-	-	-	2.1	0.3	-	0.4	3.0
1995	-	-	0.1	-	-	-	2.2	0.3	-	0.5	3.1
1996 ³	-	-	0.1	-	-	-	2.0	0.3	-	0.5	2.9

- = None reported.

¹ Includes the 48 contiguous States. Because of rounding, regional acres may not sum to U.S. totals.

² Corn and sorghum for grain.

³ Preliminary, subject to revision.

⁴ Less than 50,000 acres.

Source: USDA, ERS, compiled from NASS, *Crop Production*, Annual Summary and Monthly reports.